

ADMIRAL SCHLEY'S DEFENCE.

FIGHT OFFICERS WHO SERVED ON THE BROOKLYN TESTIFY.

Ensign Marble Swears That He Heard Capt. Sigbee Tell Schley That Cervera's Ships Were Not at Santiago—Ensign Halligan Testifies That Schley Said, the Day Before the Attack, That the Colon, That He Was Going In to Develop the Batteries at Long Range, but Not to Attempt to Destroy the Colon—Firing Ranges of the Brooklyn in the Battle With Cervera Given by Five Witnesses, but No Two Agree.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 17.—Eight officers who served on the flagship Brooklyn in the Spanish war were placed on the witness stand before the Schley Court of Inquiry today to give testimony in behalf of Admiral Schley. Five of them, now captains, were the naval leaders. The others were a Lieutenant-Commander, then a Lieutenant, a Lieutenant, then an ensign, and a surgeon. The five boys-looking ensigns gave the most interesting testimony. One of them flatly contradicted Capt. Charles D. Sigbee's statement that he had never told Admiral Schley that he believed the Spanish ships were not at Santiago. He said he heard Capt. Sigbee say that he did not believe they were there. Another said he heard him say that the Flying Squadron approached Cienfuegos, something that Admiral Schley said helped convince him that the Spanish fleet was there. Capt. Cook and all the other officers of the Brooklyn, except Lieut. Forde, have testified that they did not hear any words of command. A third ensign said Admiral Schley told him that he was going in on May 31 to develop the Santiago batteries at long range, but not to attempt to destroy the Colon, which was lying near the harbor entrance. A great many officers have testified that Admiral Schley said before this affair that he was going in to "put the Colon" and try to sink her, but they asserted that he would not let the attacking ships go near enough to the Spanish vessel any harm.

All five young officers testified that the Brooklyn got very close to the Spanish ships in the battle off Santiago before the turn began, and that one of the Spaniards started for the Brooklyn as if to ram her. Ensign Ables said that 1,000 yards was the lowest firing range given to him and that the Viscaya turned out toward the Brooklyn, but in a few minutes changed her course. To a question by the Court he made the rather remarkable statement that this was the range when the "loop" was completed. All other testimony on this point has been that the range after the turn was more than twice that distance.

Ensign Halligan testified that 1,200 yards was the lowest range at which he fired, and that he saw the Viscaya change direction and head toward the Brooklyn, turning back, however, at once. She was 2,000 yards away then. Ensign May agreed with Ensign Halligan as to the lowest range. When the "loop" was completed the range was 2,500 yards. He said the Spanish ships at one time headed for the Brooklyn.

Ensign Hand testified that he heard an officer call through a tube that the Viscaya was heading for the Brooklyn, but Admiral Dewey excluded this as hearsay. He gave the first range as 1,400 yards. Ensign Marble said that during the loop a range of 900 yards was given, but he fired at 1,000 because the Brooklyn was turning so fast. He, too, asserted that one of the Spanish ships headed for the Brooklyn. Medical Director Fitzsimons, who was Chief Surgeon on the Brooklyn, said he heard the range of 900 yards passed.

It was Ensign Halligan who testified that he heard firing when the Flying Squadron was going to Cienfuegos. The vessel was among the Spanish ships at the time, he was induced to disbelieve the Navy Department's orders to stay at Santiago by a statement made to him by Capt. Sigbee that, although Sigbee had been off Santiago for a week, he had not seen anything of Cervera's ships and did not believe they were in the harbor. Capt. Sigbee wrote to the Secretary of the Navy denying that he had expressed any such opinion, and asserted that he did believe the Spanish ships were there and had told Admiral Schley. He testified to the same effect before the Schley court, but afterward corrected his testimony on that point.

The conversation between Schley and Sigbee took place on May 26, when Sigbee's ship, the St. Paul, encountered the Flying Squadron some distance to the south of Santiago. The squadron stopped him and then started back for Key West. Ensign Marble testified to-day that he was standing near Schley as Sigbee came aboard the Brooklyn and that he heard Sigbee say to an inquiry from the Commodore: "They are not here," adding that "they," which the witness understood to mean the Spanish ships, could not be there unless he (Sigbee) knew it, as he had been off Santiago for about a week.

Ensign May gave the testimony about Commodore Schley's purpose in firing toward shore on May 31. He testified that the evening before he had a conversation with Schley, in which the latter said that he was going to take some of the ships to day to fire at the Spanish batteries at long range; that it was not to be a bombardment or an attempt to destroy the Colon, which had been seen lying near the harbor entrance for two days, but was intended only to develop the shore batteries, and that the Navy Department did not want him to expose his ships and fire while the Spanish fleet remained in the harbor. The ensign received an order from the Department not to expose his ships to land batteries, but this was afterward modified. Nothing to show that Admiral Schley received any such order has been produced in evidence, but Mr. Forde, his senior counsel, has testified that it was sent to him. Officers of the ships that took part in the affair of May 31 have sworn that Sigbee announced that he intended to go in and sink the Colon, but that although he gave the range as 7,000 yards, they were not permitted to go in anywhere near that distance to the harbor entrance. The Spanish fleet remained in the harbor at the time, and the American ships started back the month of the harbor at a snail's pace, that the Colon was not a few minutes only, that the speed was too fast to permit guns to be aimed accurately in that time, and that although the range of 10,000 yards, and on the 10th

11,000 yards, were tried, all the shots fell short of the Colon. The great mass of officers have testified that they were told to fire at the Colon.

Lieutenant-Commander Griffin, the senior watch officer on the Brooklyn, testified to-day that Admiral Schley would not let the Brooklyn follow the example of other ships off Santiago in going to Cienfuegos harbor, and if she had kept on after stopping twenty-two miles or so south of that place, instead of turning around and starting back for Key West, it would have brought her almost anywhere to the eastward.

There was a big crowd at the court's session to-day. Most of those who came were women. Admiral Schley went among the spectators as usual during the recess hour and shook hands with a number of people.

THE CIENTRUGOS BLOCKADE. Lieut. Charles Webster, formerly on the Brooklyn, who was on the stand yesterday, was the first witness called this morning, but he did not give any additional testimony of importance. When he was on the stand yesterday Lieut. Webster told the court that off Cienfuegos, according to his recollection, the Flying Squadron of the Flying Squadron was perpendicular to the shore line at night. In THE SUN's report it was erroneously stated that the Flying Squadron was perpendicular to the shore line at night. The Flying Squadron, now stationed at Mare Island, Cal., who was senior watch officer on the Brooklyn in the Spanish war, testified that at Cienfuegos Schley's ships were further off shore at night than in the day. He told of a conversation on May 26, while the Flying Squadron was on the way to Santiago, between Commodore Schley and Lieutenant-Commander Southerland of the Eagle. Schley said to Southerland that he could not delay the squadron any longer on account of the Eagle, which was proceeding slowly, and ordered him to go to Kingston, Jamaica, for coal. From there the squadron was ahead at the increased speed of nine knots. Of the Santiago blockade Mr. Griffin said that Schley's ships were about two miles closer to the harbor at night than by day. He testified also that when it was suggested to Commodore Schley, as it had been several times, that the Brooklyn go to Guantanamo to coal and give the officers and men a rest from the strain of the blockade, he had answered in each instance that he preferred to remain on the station until the Spanish ships came out of the harbor.

In the battle of July 3 Mr. Griffin was in charge of the Brooklyn's powder and torpedo division, with station on the berth deck. He went to the forecastle after the Viscaya, Teresa and Guendao had gone ashore, and watched the chase of the Colon. Commodore Schley, he said, impressed him at that time as being remarkably cool, considering the battle that had just closed.

THE WEATHER ON THE RUN TO SANTIAGO. Cross-examined by the Judge-Advocate, Mr. Griffin, after examining the Brooklyn's log, said that during the afternoon watch on the 25th the sky was clear and the Flying Squadron was about forty miles to the westward of the place where the squadron first stopped on its passage to Santiago. The weather was moderate, with a gentle breeze from the north, and the sea was smooth. On May 25 and 26 the condition of the sea was moderate, on both days the wind was from the north, and the sea was smooth. On the 25th there were rain squalls and a moderate breeze from the north. On the 26th the breeze varied from light and gentle to moderate, the weather being cloudy, pleasant and warm.

Mr. Griffin's statement of the witness that the sea was short and choppy for small vessels on the 26th, when the Eagle was sent away, Capt. Lemly had said that the sea was smooth. He said that the state of the sea was recorded. It was recorded as moderate. There was considerable surf, he testified, in the morning of May 27, when Admiral Schley had stated that the surf on those days was too high to permit him to communicate with the shore. He said that the surf was too high to permit him to communicate with the shore. He said that the surf was too high to permit him to communicate with the shore.

Mr. Griffin's statement that as the Flying Squadron approached Cienfuegos he heard gun firing, and that the Spanish ships had arrived there and was being saluted, the witness was asked if he had heard any firing at that time. "No, sir," he answered.

DIDN'T PROCEED WITH DESTRUCTION. "Did the Flying Squadron proceed with destruction directly from Cienfuegos to Santiago?" asked Mr. Hanna.

"Yes, sir, until they stopped and turned back on the 26th," he replied. "The speed of the slowest vessel necessarily fixed the speed of the squadron."

Q. What was your vessel headed toward Santiago at any time on the 25th? Mr. Griffin answered that the Brooklyn was indicated in the log at that time and Mr. Hanna added this to his question: Would those courses it continued bring you to Santiago? "No, sir," he answered.

Q. Where would they bring you? A. They would have brought us almost anywhere in the Gulf of Mexico, but I do not know that in rounding the coast of Cuba we did not head directly for Santiago, but took a westerly course, going to the south and then to the east.

QUESTIONS BY THE COURT. The Court asked the witness these questions, to which the answers are appended:

Q. Was it the readiness of the sea that made it difficult for you to take the Merrimack in tow and that caused the hawsers to part? A. I'm not sure.

Q. Did the Merrimack part or did the ends slip from the Merrimack? A. My impression is the hawsers parted, but I am not sure.

Q. What difficulties did the Brooklyn have in towing the Merrimack to the south? A. I don't know that there was any difficulty at that time.

Q. Was the surf on the beach at Cienfuegos high enough to prevent communication with shore on May 22 and 23? A. I should say it was, except there might be some particular spot where the boats might go in and find a landing place.

Q. Was any examination made by boat at Cienfuegos to ascertain if a landing could be made? A. Yes.

Q. From what direction did the freshest and heaviest sea come in the latter part of May? A. At that time the sea began to blow from the eastward to the south.

Q. Did you see the Texas of the Iowa when the Spanish ships came in? If so, give their bearings to the Brooklyn? A. I did not see them.

ENSIGN ABLES'S TESTIMONY. Ensign Clarence A. Ables, a boyish-looking officer, who served on the Brooklyn as a naval cadet, testified that the Flying Squadron on April 18, 1898, testified that the Flying Squadron was there, was heavy, that the weather was heavy, and that the sea was moderate for large ships, but the small vessels pitched and rolled, retarding their headway.

The witness started to tell what a moderate sea meant, but Mr. Hanna interrupted to ask Mr. Ables whether he believed that it was necessary to have witnesses tell the court what the condition of the sea was, and to the Judge-Advocate testified that he was a witness to a rough sea and strong sea, which caused laughter, which embarrassed the young officer. Then he added that a moderate sea was one which would cause the Eagle to pitch and roll.

At Santiago the night blockade was maintained at a distance of five or six miles from the harbor entrance, said Mr. Ables. He said that the Spanish fleet was inside the squadron line, and one night he saw one of these, the Merrimack, with glasses.

BATTERIES AT THE SANTIAGO BATTLE. In the battle of July 3, the witness said the Flying Squadron was about 10,000 yards from the shore, while the Spanish ships were about 1,000 yards from the shore. The firing was begun with the port guns. He has

used 1,100 yards range with the starboard battery. The range was then increased as the Brooklyn was proceeding to the westward. [After the loop was completed.] "Viscaya turned out with her starboard gun leading toward us," said the witness, "but in a few moments she turned back again toward the beach. She seemed to be on fire in two or three places."

Mr. Ables showed that he did not want to make an estimate as to how soon Admiral Sampson's flagship, the New York, came up after the Colon went ashore. "He said he did not know and did not want to say," but finally ventured, "about an hour."

Mr. Ables objected to this, saying it was immaterial, and the witness said that he did not like to make an estimate, and questioning on this line was dropped.

To a question by Mr. Rayner, the witness said that "encouraging messages to cheer us up were sent from the central station in the battle, but he did not know who sent them. Mr. Rayner remarked that this would be shown when Admiral Schley took the stand.

THINGS THE COURT WANTED TO KNOW. The Court asked these questions:

Q. Did you see the fall of any projectiles on July 3 fired at 1,100 yards range? A. Not to my recollection.

Q. What were the relative positions of the Viscaya, Colon and the Brooklyn when you fired the starboard gun at the range of 1,100 yards on July 3? A. Well, about the beam, about three points ahead of the beam—the Viscaya being ahead of the Colon.

Q. Was that after the Brooklyn had completed her turn by way of south and west? A. Yes, sir. All the other witnesses who have testified that this range was used have said it was before the Brooklyn turned.

GUN FIRING AT CIENTRUGOS. Ensign John Halligan, Jr., likewise boyish-looking and smiling, who had served also as a naval cadet on the Brooklyn, and who had come home from the Philippines to testify, said he had heard firing of guns at Cienfuegos when the Flying Squadron was approaching that port from Key West. This confirmed Admiral Schley's statement that gun firing began on the Brooklyn when the Flying Squadron approached Cienfuegos helped convince him that the Spanish fleet was there.

On cross-examination the witness said that he did not remember having heard Commodore Schley say when he received the order not to expose his ships or anything else about it. The signal man and two marines wearing ear and might have overheard the conversation.

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Q. Did you see the Texas when the Brooklyn was turning with port beam? A. I did not see it.

Q. Did you see any of the Spanish ships when they were coming out of the harbor on July 3? A. Yes, when I was with them two of them were out and a third was just coming out.

Q. How were the Spanish ships heading when coming out of the harbor and reference to the position of the Brooklyn on July 3? A. After they came out of the entrance they were headed to the westward, apparently toward the Brooklyn.

ENSIGN HAND CALLED. Ensign James A. Hand, who was also a cadet on the Brooklyn, said that the weather was bad while the Flying Squadron was going to Santiago. In the battle of July 3 he was engaged in the training of the first range he gave, he said, was 1,400 yards. One of the junior officers reported to him through the tube that the Viscaya had turned out toward the Brooklyn.

This answer was excluded by Admiral Dewey as hearsay. Mr. Hand said he frequently transmitted messages from the Brooklyn to the Flying Squadron, but he did not recall the tenor, caused the men in the forward handling room to give three cheers for the Flying Squadron.

ENSIGN MARBLE'S TESTIMONY. Still another young officer who served on the Brooklyn as a naval cadet gave testimony for Admiral Schley. He was Ensign Marble, of Marble's, who testified that during the battle, when the Spanish ships were nearly astern, the range of the Flying Squadron was 100 yards. The range was passed to him at 100 yards, but he did not use it because the turn was made so rapidly that he thought the range was too short.

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Admiral Schley called this affair a reconnaissance, and the speed of the batteries. Mr. May's testimony was important in corroborating Admiral Schley's statement that he had merely made a reconnaissance and not an attack.

OBJECT OF THE ATTACK ON THE COLON. By Mr. Rayner—Did you have any conversation with Commodore Schley on the 30th of May relative to the engagement of the 31st? Yes.

Q. State the circumstances. A. I was on the signal bridge of the Brooklyn after dinner. The Commodore came up on the bridge, and then it was that the conversation took place. The Commodore said: "To-morrow we are going in with the ships not coaling to bombard at long range to develop the exact location of the batteries and to form an estimate of their strength."

He said he was not going in for a regular bombardment, as he had instructions from the Department not to hazard his ships against the batteries, and that if he should disable one of his ships during the bombardment his force would then be rendered inferior to the Spanish forces inside the harbor; that he was merely going for a reconnaissance and not to attack the batteries or to destroy the Colon.

Q. He said that to you? A. Yes, he said that to me.

Q. Did he say what ships he was going to take in? A. I do not remember.

Mr. May said he was on the forward gun-deck of the Brooklyn in the battle of July 3. The least range he used was 1,200 yards, and that was with the port battery. After the "loop" the range was about 2,500 yards.

On cross-examination the witness said he did not remember having heard Commodore Schley say when he received the order not to expose his ships or anything else about it. The signal man and two marines wearing ear and might have overheard the conversation.

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